

Commission's Grant Application Form

Shelby County Board of Commissioners

GRANT APPLICATION

Legal Name of the Organization:	Books from Birth, Inc.
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EIN:	202962326
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Street Address of Organization	2924 Walnut Grove Rd., Suite #4, Memphis, TN 38111
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Office Phone:	9018204506
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E-mail	jwicks@booksfrombirth.org
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(Section Break)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

First Name	Jamila
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Last Name	Wicks
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GENERAL CONTACT FOR THIS REQUEST(if other than Executive Director)

First Name	Jamila
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Last Name	Wicks
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Title:	Executive Director
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DESCRIPTION OF GRANT REQUEST

Program/Project Area:	Early Childhood Literacy, Kindergarten Readiness
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Amount Requested	65,000
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Total Organizational budget (for current year):	1,436,770.17
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Total Project/Program Budget:	1,111,416.77
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Dates covered by this budget:	July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017
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Project/Program Name:	Early Childhood Literacy - Imagination Library
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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION

Please summarize in a short paragraph the purpose of your agency. Briefly explain why your agency is requesting this grant, what outcomes you hope to achieve, and how you will spend the funds if a grant is made.

Books from Birth promotes kindergarten readiness and strengthens family bonds in Shelby County by providing books for all children from birth to age five at no cost to families. More than 42,000 children in Shelby County benefit from Books from Birth each year. We raise the money from the local community to make the program possible. We are requesting grant funds from the Shelby County Board of Commissioners to provide books to its youngest citizens.

(Section Break)

Narrative - Organization

Current programs and accomplishments. Please emphasize the achievements of the recent past.

Books from Birth aims to make sure all young children in Shelby County have books in their homes. Books from Birth works in partnership with Tennessee's Imagination Library to provide a new, high-quality, age-appropriate book in the home every month to each Shelby County child during the first five years of life. There is no cost to families to take part in the program. Outreach to enroll children in the program and collaborating with community partners to make sure young children receive books is the cornerstone of Books from Birth's work. During the past eleven years, Books from Birth has mailed over 4 million books to children throughout Shelby County, after an initial shipment of 2,500 books in 2005. Today, Books from Birth sends books to roughly 42,000 children each month in every neighborhood in the county. Over 60,000 children have graduated from the program at age five and 64% of children in Shelby County are currently enrolled, with many more having participated without graduating.

Numbers of paid full-time staff: 3

Number of paid part-time staff: 1

Number of volunteers: 25

(Section Break)

Narrative - Funding Request

Please describe the program/project for which you seek funding and include how it will benefit the general welfare of residents in Shelby County, TN.

Books from Birth will use the grant from Shelby County Board of Commissioners to fund the local cost of providing Shelby County children with books in the home every month for an entire year. Locally, it cost \$21 dollars to provide a Shelby County child with a book each month for an entire year. This is a small and smart investment to change a child's life and inspire them to read more, learn more, and be more. Every dollar invested in early childhood education programs benefits society as whole. Benefits include higher high school graduation rates and lower rates of crime, teen pregnancy and public assistance dependency.

General Operating Support

If applying for general operating support, briefly describe how this grant will be used.

N/A - We are not applying for general operating support.

Project Support

Please explain the specific project including a statement of its primary purpose and the need or problem that you are seeking to address.

The presence of books in the home is a top predictor of whether a child will attain a high level of education. Children of low -income families benefit the most from having books in the home. Books from Birth seeks to support local county initiatives to boost students' literacy skills and academic achievement levels by mailing a new, age-appropriate book into the homes of children every month for their first five years of life at no cost to families. At the end of five years, children have a home library of a little over 60 books. Providing books in the home is a unique opportunity for family engagement, vocabulary and reading skills development. Books from Birth's primary focus is to promote kindergarten readiness, strengthen family bonds

and provide families with the early resources needed to put their child on a pathway to success in school and life. The vision of Books from Birth is for all children living in Shelby County to open a book, open a mind, and open the door to success. This vision is fulfilled by our mission of promoting kindergarten readiness and strengthening family bonds by putting books in homes. The aims of Books from Birth are: •To ensure all Shelby County children are prepared to be successful in kindergarten by planting the early seeds of literacy and education. •To give Shelby County children a common early childhood experience through participation in the Imagination Library. •To promote healthy relationships between Shelby County's young children and their parents or caregivers by encouraging reading together on a regular basis.

How does the project contribute to your organization's overall mission?

The mission of Books from Birth is to promote kindergarten readiness and strengthen family bonds in Shelby County by providing age-appropriate books for all children from birth to age five. This project provides direct funding support for children, 0 - 5 years, to receive books in the mail each month for an entire year.

(Section Break)

Narrative - Evaluation

Please explain how you will measure the effectiveness of your activities. Describe your criteria for a successful program and the results you expect to have achieved by the end of the funding period.

Books from Birth seeks to support local county initiatives to boost students' literacy skills by promoting the importance of reading and helping to create strong home literacy practices beginning at birth. Books from Birth ensures children who enter kindergarten are already primed to learn to read. Research validates the Books from Birth Imagination Library program has a measurable and significant positive effect. According to a 2012 research study conducted by The Urban Child Institute (TUCI) in partnership with the former Memphis City Schools, kindergarten students who participate in Books from Birth benefit when compared with children who did not participate. Research findings are: Books from Birth families have stronger early childhood reading habits. They are more likely to: • Read with children, go to the library, talk about books, sing the ABCs, • Enjoy reading with children and their children are more likely to enjoy reading. • The more books a family receives from Books from Birth, the more likely they are to report better family reading habits and greater comfort reading to children. Children

who receive Books from Birth have stronger reading readiness scores. • Participants are four times as likely as nonparticipants to be in the highest quartile of reading readiness scores. • Both low-income and middle-income students have higher reading readiness scores if they participate in program. • Among children with fewer books in the home, program participants score 11 points higher on reading readiness (on an 86 point scale) than non-participants. A follow-up study performed in 2014 and 2015 shows these same children, now 3rd graders, were most likely in the highest performing tier and least likely to be in the lowest performing tier, showing the program has staying power. This research validates the Books from Birth Imagination Library program has a measurable and significantly positive effect on language readiness scores for children in Shelby County, preparing them for success in the classroom and beyond. In brief, Books from Birth is uniquely equipped to be successful and there is evidence the Books from Birth strategy works. The program is a smart, simple and effective investment to help Shelby County build and sustain a community of readers.

Attachments:

If your request is under \$25,000 please attach the following:

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1. Copy of the entity's 501 (c) 3 certificate for charitable organizations or 501 (c) 4 certificate for civic organizations

 2. Most recent IRS Form 990 or Financial Statements (balance sheet and income statement) as of the most recent fiscal year end certified by Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer of the entity.

 3. Complete Budget for grant request

If your request is \$25,000 or more please attach the following:

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1. Copy of the entity's 501 (c) 3 certificate for charitable organizations or 501 (c) 4 certificate for civic organizations

 2. Copy of an annual audit as of a date within 18 months of the start of the current fiscal year.

 3. Complete Budget for grant request

File 1 [IRS Determination Letter.pdf](#)

File 2 [BfB Audit 2014-2015.pdf](#)

File 3

[SHELBY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS](#)
[GRANT_PROJECT BUDGET FY2017.xlsx](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Read, and if you agree to the provisions, sign the following:

The information provided has been submitted in good faith and as completely as our records and recollections permit.

I understand that the information provided in this application shall be open to inspection upon filing with the office of the Shelby County Board of Commissioners.

Signature:	Jamila Wicks
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Printed Name:	Jamila Wicks
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Date	8/2/2016
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